

U.S. Department of Education
2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 13IN6

	Charter	Title 1	Magnet	Choice
School Type (Public Schools):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Principal: Mrs. Sheryll Harper

Official School Name: Discovery Middle School

School Mailing Address: 10050 Brummitt Road
Granger, IN 46530-7264

County: St. Joseph State School Code Number*: 7372

Telephone: (574) 674-6010 E-mail: sharper@phm.k12.in.us

Fax: (574) 679-4214 Web site/URL: <http://discovery.phmschools.org/>

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. Jerry Thacker Superintendent e-mail: jthacker@phm.k12.in.us

District Name: Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation District Phone: (674) 259-7941

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. K. Jaye Galloway

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools (Aba.Kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or its equivalent each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's AYP requirement or its equivalent in the 2012-2013 school year. Meeting AYP or its equivalent must be certified by the state. Any AYP status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2007 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for that period.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 11 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 3 Middle/Junior high schools
 1 High schools
 0 K-12 schools
 15 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 6048

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Suburban
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 16
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	138	141	279
7	158	130	288
8	149	145	294
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:			861

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
8 % Asian
3 % Black or African American
1 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
87 % White
1 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2011-2012 school year: 7%
This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Step	Description	Value
(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	36
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	26
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	62
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	861
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.07
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	7

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 7%
Total number of ELL students in the school: 56
Number of non-English languages represented: 21
Specify non-English languages:

Arfrikaans, Arabic, English (Other), German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Italian, Korean, Lao (Laotian), Mandarin (Sichuanese), Marathi, Polish, Pujabi, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog (Pilipion), Telugu, Turkish, Urdu, and Vietnamese

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 11%

Total number of students who qualify: 93

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 9%

Total number of students served: 76

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>14</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>5</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>33</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>10</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>8</u> Mental Retardation	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>24</u>	<u>1</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>12</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>19</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>14</u>	<u>10</u>
Total number	<u>71</u>	<u>14</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 36:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2012.

Graduating class size: _____

Enrolled in a 4-year college or university _____%

Enrolled in a community college _____%

Enrolled in vocational training _____%

Found employment _____%

Military service _____%

Other _____%

Total _____**0%**

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

☐ No

☒ Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award? 2006

PART III - SUMMARY

It is the mission of Discovery Middle School staff, students, parents, and community to ensure all students show continuous growth in academic, social, emotional, and physical areas. This is accomplished through a partnership with parents to create a safe, focused, and interactive learning environment rich in content, creativity, and experiences where students have ownership and maximize their learning.

“The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.” Upon opening Discovery Middle School in 1996, this quote by Marcel Proust became a popular motto. No other expression better exemplifies the culture at Discovery. The staff never shies away from the challenge of new ideas and paradigms. We have experienced looping, inquiry-based learning, multidisciplinary planning and instruction, co-teaching, multi-age classrooms, student-led conferences, and now technology in the classroom, Common Core Standards embedded with literacy across all curriculum areas, teachers creating “flipped” classrooms, and students who advocate for themselves and their peers. This professional courage has, and will lead us onto new voyages.

Discovery Middle School is a 6-8 middle school of 861 students located in the suburban area of Granger, Indiana. Each grade level is housed in a separate wing of our building, thereby creating smaller learning communities of staff and students. Music, wellness, and rotations classrooms extend around this interior. Special education teachers work with each grade level, supporting students in classrooms and in areas where students perform jobs and learn/practice life skills. We are proud of our multi-cultural student body where 21 languages are represented.

We understand the necessity of preparing students to become successful in a global society. Therefore, our principal and school became involved in the Chinese Exchange Initiative six years ago with the city of Anshan, China. All of our students can participate in these experiences, by either hosting or traveling, at some time during their middle school career. To further enhance students’ global awareness, we have added a European trip as an additional overseas experience.

At Discovery, student voice is valued. In fact, we teach students to combine strong evidence and passion to “argue”. Student voice makes sense and fits well into the culture. This attitude permeates the social environment where students care for their fellow classmates, making this a safe place. We listen to student needs and design lessons that place them at the center of the learning. Collaborative learning groups are utilized in every classroom every period of the day. Students demonstrate their understanding, and use contextual vocabulary, in genuine discussions with their peers. Exemplary student work is displayed and celebrated. These models promote a continual push toward excellence. Students monitor their growth and are able to articulate their progress in terms of a definite plan for success. Parents and students routinely participate with staff in conferences where problem solving is the focus. We have created a safe and non-threatening social and learning environment that encourages mature and appropriate freedom of expression.

Discovery has maintained a reputation within our community as a school with high expectations and excellent results. The culture of this school is to build strong relationships with our students so we can expand their capacity as learners and as citizens. The faculty, our strongest asset, is a group of committed lifelong learners who are bonded through continuous staff development. We read, study, and discuss teaching and learning routinely. We utilize brain research to guide our decisions. As a result, Discovery classrooms are interactive, collaborative, and full of hands-on opportunities for learning.

We have been named an Indiana Four Star School each consecutive year since we opened in 1996. A wide variety of extra-curricular activities at Discovery reflect our commitment to helping each student find a fit. We have established a winning reputation in state academic competitions in the past five years,

bringing home six state championships in content-related competitions. More than once, our students have been first in the nation in the difficult Blue Division of Word Masters. In athletics, we have had 32 league championships since 2007-2008.

A Madeline Hunter motto fits us well: “If you want to feel secure, do what you already know how to do. If you want to be a true professional and continue to grow, go to the cutting-edge of your competence, which means a temporary loss of security. So whenever you don’t quite know what you’re doing, know you’re growing.” Given the demands placed on everyone, we always put students first. Teachers assume personal and professional responsibility for ensuring student learning. By remaining curious, daring, and even at times perplexed, we are driven to be at the cutting edge of our profession. In fact, we find we are reinventing ourselves all the time!

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A. Each year, Discovery Middle School students participate in the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress Plus (ISTEP+) program. The ISTEP+ is used to measure student achievement in the areas of English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science (in grade 6), and Social Studies (in grade 7). There are two types of tests used in the ISTEP+ program, multiple-choice and applied skills. In the multiple-choice component, students are given four or five answer choices from which to determine the best answer to the question. The applied skills sections require students to not only answer each part of the question or prompt, but also to provide detailed responses showing work, explaining processes, and justifying answers. For select students with disabilities, the Indiana Modified Achievement Standards Test (IMAST) is the most appropriate assessment. Fewer than 1% of more severely disabled students participate in the Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting (ISTAR).

ISTEP+ reports student achievement relative to the Indiana Academic Standards. The state sets score thresholds for each subject and grade level to determine proficiency. Students who meet or exceed these cut scores are considered “Pass” or “Pass+”. Students who show a high level of proficiency are ranked as “Pass+” in that subject area. Students who do not meet the minimum level of proficiency are categorized as “Did Not Pass”. Five-year data, ranging from 2007 to 2012, shows that the average percent of students passing for all grades in English/Language is 93.3% and in Mathematics is 93.2%. These rates of passing exceed the Indiana state goal of 90%. In keeping with the school’s goal that “all students can learn,” we continue to strive for improvement. The staff, students, and community at Discovery will not be satisfied with anything less than 100% of our students meeting proficiency.

B. In examining the ISTEP+ data over the past five years, the focus was to determine trends and achievement gaps between the regular student population and certain subgroups, primarily socio-economically, disadvantaged students, and special education students. The data for the regular student groups shows that levels of achievement surpassed the 90% mark, except for 2008-2009 seventh-grade mathematics where the passing rate for this group was 89%. The trend in results for the regular student population indicates consistent improvement, in almost all grade levels and subject-areas, from 2009 to present. The data from the 2011-2012 ISTEP+ testing shows that passing rates exceeded 95% for all grades in English/Language Arts and Mathematics, except for a passing rate of 92% in seventh-grade mathematics. Discussions regarding the slight gap in achievement in seventh-grade mathematics suggested that the narrow emphasis on algebra may have led to this result. The systematic, school-wide application of the Acuity program will help address this gap. Last year, we began using Acuity to predict student mastery of identified grade-level content standards. Teachers identify specific strengths and areas in need of improvement, by class and by individual student. Classroom teachers adjust instruction to match needs, and a certified language arts teacher facilitates a learning lab where students receive regular, focused instruction. With every Acuity testing result, the list of students and their needs changes. Celebrations take place as scores improve, and more intense interventions support the need for continued growth. An instructional intervention team meets bi-weekly to review current data and make recommendations for student assistance. The real-time reaction to results is rewarding for students.

Over the five-year span, the data shows an achievement gap between our regular student population and our socio-economically disadvantaged and special education students. The gap is more pronounced between the special education students and the regular student group. The average proficiency rates for special education students in Mathematics are 71.3% and in English/Language Arts is 65.8%. These gaps are 21.9% and 27.5% lower, respectively, over this period of time. Progress has been made recently in regards to the gap in both subject areas. Last year, the average proficiency across all grade-levels in mathematics increased and the gaps decreased. These students have benefited from small group instruction, computer-based remediation programs, study skills programs, extended time, and access to

technology-based resources. Similar interventions and strategies have been used in English/Language Arts. In addition to these approaches, a school-wide literacy initiative has been put in place. A literacy team of teachers has facilitated this program which includes literacy coaching, professional development at staff meetings, peer observations, weekly school-wide reading sessions, and literacy-based lesson planning. This commitment to improving literacy skills across the curriculum in all grade levels has shown a positive impact in the short time that it has been incorporated.

The close and careful attention to assessment performance and growth has been paramount to the success experienced at Discovery. All of our groups perform well above the state averages, and last year our combined scores were the highest passing rate of any public school in Indiana. We have seen a steady increase of our students receiving a “Pass+” rating in all content areas and grade levels. This close monitoring of student academic needs and a climate of achievement have led to these results. We continue to respond quickly to formative testing results and adjust instruction for specific students. Parents are informed and asked to support students at home on Acuity. At school, students are supported with additional time in our Acuity lab, working on specific skills with a certified teacher/lab coordinator.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Using assessment results to enable students to be successful is a key component to Discovery Middle School. Initially, two types of assessment data are analyzed, ISTEP+ and Acuity Testing. These collections of data are used in concert with each other to give a more focused picture of each student and help meet the individual student’s academic needs throughout the school year.

Assessment data is disaggregated in several ways. We look at assessment results in regards to subjects, grade levels, standards, demographics, gender, and score levels. We carefully look for strengths, areas in need of improvement, and trends. These results are analyzed by administration, teaching staff, and guidance staff to make connections between the data and instruction, programs, schedules, student services, and other potential factors. Data is tracked over time to notice if there are trends from year to year.

At the beginning of the school year, individual student ISTEP+ results are broken down, by subject, into categories of “Pass”, “Pass+”, and “Did Not Pass (DNP)”. Students whose scores fall within a range of +/- 12 points of the “passing cut score”, are also analyzed. These targeted students are placed in the Learning Lab to provide an individualized focus on gaps in skills and achievement. The Learning Lab is a small-group, computer-based setting that is supervised by a certified teacher whose primary goal is to provide specific instruction on the targeted skills and monitor individual progress. Acuity assessment results are also analyzed throughout the year to identify academic needs, areas of weakness, and student progress. Once strengths and weaknesses are identified, that information is used to determine factors that led to these results, occurring trends, needed instructional approaches, and necessary interventions. All students’ progress, not just these targeted groups, are tracked and re-analyzed continually. These categories of students are fluid due to the consistent and systematic nature of Acuity assessments.

There are three types of Acuity assessments that are utilized in tracking students progress and determining future success on state testing - quarterly pre-tests, quarterly post-tests, and predictive tests. Acuity pre-assessments are given at the beginning of each quarter and are used to plan instruction to meet the instructional needs of the class and individual students. Post-tests are used to evaluate quarterly progress and to plan for interventions. The Acuity predictive assessments are of particular focus, as they help “predict” student performance on upcoming state testing. These Acuity Predictive assessments are given three times throughout the school year leading up to state testing. Data, both from the ISTEP+ and Acuity assessments, is analyzed for each subject and standard and is used to isolate curriculum that students have not yet mastered prior to taking the ISTEP+. Results are examined on a student by student basis.

Based on Acuity assessment data, students are assigned Acuity lessons that target individual academic needs. Progress is monitored by content teachers to help determine what differentiations and instructional adjustments are needed. Teachers also create formative assessments on these targeted skills and concepts.

The partnership between parents, students, and the school also plays a pivotal role in using the assessment results. Parents are invited to meet with teachers, guidance, and administration to look at student data and make decisions regarding student success.

Parents have access to their students' state testing results through the Indiana Parent Network (IPN). The IPN is an online resource where parents can access test results and find personalized information, resources, and activities to help their children succeed. Guidance counselors work with students and parents to plan interventions to support learning. The IPN is an important resource in this process. Parents are encouraged and expected through this partnership to play an important role in their children's educational life here.

Student ownership is another important aspect of how assessment results are used at Discovery. All students analyze and evaluate their individual assessment results and use them to set goals and promote self-awareness of academic strengths and weaknesses. Students monitor their progress in order to be informed and accountable for their success and learning. Student voice is encouraged and expected. Students also conduct a student-led conference with their parents during the school year. During student-led conferences students present portfolios, which include work samples and assessment reports.

Student academic success, as evident through assessment results, is celebrated in various ways at Discovery. Class meetings, the WDMS school news program, the quarterly Recognition Breakfast, and displays of student work are a few ways students are recognized.

By continual attention to assessment results and a total school community commitment to monitoring student progress, we are able to differentiate instruction, provide quality student services, actively involve parents, develop curriculum, adapt to changes, proactively work towards incorporating Common Core standards, and most importantly, increase levels of student success.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

The teachers and administrators at Discovery encourage others to join them on their journeys of discovery. At the local level teachers and administrators are active within the corporation and with area schools. Teachers in the district meet to map curriculum, create assessments, and evaluate data. Focal points of meetings are geared towards aligning curriculum with the Common Core Standards and increasing readiness and rigor for PARCC assessments. Through the Collaborative of Teaching and Learning literacy training, teachers visit high school classrooms to observe and offer insights. After experiencing success with student led conferences, the physical education curriculum, the positive behavior initiative and other programs, Discovery has invited educators to visit and see these in action. Teachers have shared inquiry-based learning models with local teachers through programs at the University of Notre Dame. One of Discovery's teachers worked with a Notre Dame professor to develop a workshop on theoretical understanding of the concepts and practices of inquiry based science instruction. They co-facilitate this workshop for area teachers. Our assistant principal serves locally as a Nonviolent Crisis Intervention trainer. The staff also reaches out digitally. Literacy leaders highlight strategies through blogs and the media specialist shares via Facebook and Twitter. She presented at state and national library conventions, sharing our literacy-across-the-school philosophy.

The Discovery staff contributes to education conversations across the state and nation. The principal shares assessment data and curriculum maps with Indiana administrators. The assistant principal serves on the Indiana School Safety Council. Our 2013 Indiana Teacher of the Year finalist shared best practices with educators across the state. Teachers have collaborated with a director of special education from

California, participated on an ISTEP+ committee at the state level, shared on a panel at the Indiana Library Federation conference, served as a guest contributor to the Association for Library Services to Children, and facilitated CPM math training in Indiana schools.

Additionally, we extend these conversations globally. A centerpiece of these interactions takes place through the China exchange. During our travels to China and hosting Chinese guests, educators learn from each other and share practices and experiences. We continue to build relationships with Chinese members of our community, thus enhancing our students' knowledge and experiences. An expectation of excellence in combination with a staff on the cutting edge of education leads to productive interactions with educators around the globe.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Discovery has a history of working successfully with students, families, and the community. An active Parent-Teacher-Organization (PTO) is one avenue for parent involvement. Our PTO supports our school through various avenues. PTO sponsored fundraising events at local restaurants give parents and staff a chance to partner in financial support of successful programs that aim to enhance student success. The PTO also brings in experts that meet with parents providing timely, helpful information on raising adolescents. PTO volunteers provide a variety of services for the main office, individual classrooms, and instructional media center. Parents have served as academic coaches, club sponsors, and mentors. Recognition breakfasts are another vehicle for parents to share in their children's academic lives. These breakfasts acknowledge students who have earned academic honors or other achievements. Athletic teams utilize parent groups to help provide a positive experience for student-athletes. Parents organize banquets, provide a healthy foods and beverages at events, contact media regarding successes, and communicate important information for the teams.

A strong relationship with the community is a key component to the success of Discovery. This is accomplished through a variety of clubs and activities. Our Student Leadership Club and the National Junior National Honor Society offer many opportunities to serve in the community. These projects help students connect with various organizations, which promotes the concept of interconnectedness. The 5-Star Program is another after-school club that is utilized. This program is run by a community group that teaches character and self-awareness through mentorship. Also, the building is in use by various community groups throughout the year. Through activities such as these, Discovery is a center for community involvement.

Another component vital to our success at Discovery is communication. E-mail, blogs, and online sites keep parents informed regarding curriculum, events, activities, and class information. Discovery's website includes calendars, school news, celebrations, and other information. The guidance department helps students make a successful transition to middle school, provides information and guidance related to high school scheduling, and facilitates parent/student/teacher meetings. Each spring multiple parent and student meetings are held as part of our fifth grade orientation to the middle school.

Our goal is to create a place we all want to be, to work, to laugh, to see dreams advance. Every Discovery member is part of the team and all input is valued as we strive to enrich our culture.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Encouraging deep thinking, expecting excellence for all, and promoting student voice are the hallmarks of curriculum at Discovery. The Indiana State Standards and the Common Core Standards provide the foundation for our highly interactive and collaborative curriculum.

Literacy runs through all content areas as a common thread. Research-based vocabulary, reading, writing and speaking strategies are implemented in all classes, everyday. These strategies equip students with the skills to interact with complex text, debate real-world scenarios, and creatively solve problems.

All teachers utilize formative assessments to create lessons that drive student learning. Students reflect on their assessments and set academic goals. To help students achieve their goals, interventions such as a learning lab, classroom assistants, and before-school review sessions are in place. Student ownership and academic independence is expected and nurtured at Discovery.

The language arts curriculum centers around the analysis of text, in-depth discussions and supporting claims in writing. Cross-curricular topics addressed in language arts further support reading and writing in other subject areas. Honors language arts classes are offered in all grade levels. Data drives the placement of students and instruction.

The social studies curriculum, a vehicle for both content and literacy skills, engages students in reading and interpreting complex texts, focuses on argumentative speaking and writing, and emphasizes technology literacy. These skills, such as the discrimination between reliable and unreliable sources and the identification of evidence to support a claim, not only support student learning in social studies but promote learning across the curriculum.

Student engagement defines the math curriculum. Through real-world problems and student-centered themes, students interact with math in a relevant way. The approach to solving problems and answering mathematical questions prepare them for college and their future careers. At each grade level three math classes are offered where students are assigned relative to their needs.

Teachers deliver science content by using the SEPUP (Science Education for Public Understanding) curriculum. The SEPUP program is a research-based program that integrates scientific inquiry within the context of personal and social issues. Frequent use of open-ended questions and reflection provide students opportunities to share their thinking and build understanding.

The wellness program provides students with opportunities and knowledge needed to make healthy lifestyle choices. By exploring health issues and nutrition, setting goals, and tracking their progress, students take an active role in the wellness curriculum.

Discovery values the role of the arts in the cognitive and emotional development of the whole child. All students in sixth grade take a music class, either band, choir, orchestra, or piano. Seventy percent choose to stay involved in music for seventh and eighth grade. Students regularly perform throughout the community and participate at contests and receive exemplary ratings. Additionally, students have the opportunity to enroll in an art class. Their artwork is prominently displayed throughout Discovery.

Students at Discovery experience a wide array of classes. They have the opportunity to take a family and consumer science (FACS) course. This unique module-based curriculum incorporates various subject areas into real world experiences relevant to students. In the seventh grade, students are exposed to the

German, Spanish, French, and Japanese languages and cultures. Students read, reflect, and discuss international news to gain a deeper perspective about their world. To extend this classroom learning, some students travel on school-sponsored trips to China and Europe. In computer lab class students utilize technology that applies to real world activities.

Throughout all of these unique classes, students are challenged and supported by the collaboration of teachers and the integration of curriculum.

2. Reading/English:

The English language arts curriculum at Discovery Middle School is developed to prepare students to be engaged, thoughtful participants in their communities. All students engage in intense literary study. Students move beyond comprehension and focus on insightful analysis and in-depth discussion of material. Writing assignments assess mastery of structure and the students' ability to show depth of knowledge and demonstrate their understanding of the material. Students follow The Literacy Triangle: reading, writing, and speaking every class, every day. To reinforce these goals all staff has been trained in literacy strategies to engage students and differentiate for all skill levels. These instructional methods encourage cross-curricular opportunities which support staff and promote consistency throughout the students' day. Emphasizing these strategies in our lessons allows us to focus on four key enduring understandings: reading to infer/interpret/draw conclusions; supporting arguments with evidence; resolving conflicting views encountered in source documents; and solving complex problems with no obvious answer.

These enduring understandings are developed and emphasized each grading period, culminating in the students writing a performance literacy assessment. These tasks are designed to engage students in high-level, authentic reading and writing that is aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Students receive increasingly complex fictional and informational texts to analyze, compare and apply to real life circumstances. Students demonstrate higher order thinking skills to provide required evidence to support their assertions and claims. Because the tasks are based upon specific units of studies, they allow teachers to collect data and drive instruction to move students forward.

Realizing that some students will struggle with all these expectations, we offer a variety of interventions for students with reading skills below grade level. Based upon ISTEP and Acuity scores, students may be assigned to a skills lab where they receive guided instruction with a certified teacher. Additionally, we provide a multi-aged learning lab (MALL) where students receive extra time to work in a quiet environment. Students have the opportunity to redo assessments and rewrite final papers after conferencing with the teacher.

Modifications are also established for higher-ability students. They follow the program established by the Center for Gifted Education at the College of William and Mary. This integrated curriculum model challenges the students by utilizing problem-based learning and analyzing primary sources connected to overarching themes.

All these efforts create an environment to ensure the success of all students in their learning endeavors.

3. Mathematics:

At Discovery, we offer mathematics instruction that range from basic skills to accelerated and honors math programs. Great emphasis is placed on state standards throughout each of these programs. By providing opportunities for student advancement regardless of scheduling, we strive to meet the needs of all of our students' abilities.

The foundation for our mathematics is built around the College Preparatory Mathematics (CPM) philosophy. Student centered themes are dominant where student engagement is evident daily. The teacher is truly the facilitator with questions, discussions, and closure happening within small groups. Student roles ensure all students are engaged and take ownership of the daily activities. Individual, pair, small group and whole class instruction are used to effectively impact the students' learning. We have had such success with this CPM approach that we have continued the model throughout our accelerated and honors programs. This approach fosters students to think, speak, question, interact, and build upon others input to further their own learning. This learning environment provides opportunities to communicate and explore at a higher level of understanding.

Indiana and Common Core Standards are focal points. Interdisciplinary, multi-step performance literacy tasks are used to ready students for future assessments (PARCC). Teachers compile data from these assessments and plan for instruction accordingly. A variety of instructional strategies are used to differentiate based on this data. For those well below grade level, we offer a tutorial pull-out program to provide additional building of needed skills. We have annually met one of our school improvement goals by increasing the number of students who have scored in the Pass+ range of our ISTEP+ state test. We have also had strong results (99%) of our algebra students passing the Indiana End of Course Assessment. Students in our honors program have the unique opportunity to complete two years of college level calculus while in high school, proving that we are challenging our high level students throughout their math careers. In addition, students also participate in math contests and have experienced a high success rate at these competitions.

Using a hands-on, student centered approach has proven highly effective to student achievement. We urge students to take ownership of their learning by thinking, speaking, writing, and discussing mathematics. This is evident by providing opportunities to analyze and communicate their progress. Success for all students will always be our main priority.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

The discipline of Wellness at Discovery includes the studies of health, fitness, and nutrition. Students are encouraged to show active involvement and accountability for the status of their health at present and future. Providing students with opportunities and knowledge that is needed to make healthy lifestyle choices is the foundation of our curriculum. The more a student knows about taking good care of their body and their mind, the more successful they will be.

The health curriculum develops strong literacy skills in a variety of ways. Vocabulary development, writing to demonstrate learning, reading complex texts, and academic dialogue are experienced throughout the health curriculum. The standards for literacy are utilized in all aspect of the Wellness program. This provides all students with concepts and skills necessary to build a strong foundation for lifelong health.

Students track their fitness level throughout the entire academic year. Utilizing the Fitnessgram, an assessment tool, students test their physical fitness level four times throughout the year. Students then show evidence of learning by documenting and tracking their personal fitness progress in the areas of resting and recovery heart rates, cardio respiratory endurance, flexibility, muscular strength and endurance. Through the use of graphing, journaling, charting weekly progress, students demonstrate their growth. Short and long term goals are also written in each area, analyzed through the course of the year and readjusted accordingly. Ultimately each student, at the conclusion of the school year, has a final analysis of their personal fitness achievements acquired through hard work, dedication, and use of knowledge applied from the health lessons.

Fitness also encompasses body composition and the nutritional needs of the students. Students learn how to choose the best nutritional values of foods in order to help their bodies supply the energy for necessary daily activities as well as keeping the body free of unwanted disease controlled by lifestyle choices.

Nutrition also assists students in accomplishing short term and long term goals that are written in the fitness section of their studies.

Overall, our students control their health by acquiring valuable information in the areas of physical fitness and nutritional habits. This knowledge has a direct impact on present and future lifetime experiences.

5. Instructional Methods:

Curriculum comes alive when students feel the instruction is personal and relevant. That's why offering a more personalized learning experience is key to student growth at Discovery and a valued component of the instruction. In order to reach the students at these personal levels, teachers and students are continually assessing, reevaluating, and reflecting on their progress.

There are several ways that teachers systematically and consistently monitor student progress. Formative assessments are used in each class to measure growth, target curriculum, and determine the effectiveness of instructional methods. Teachers and students use these results to choose resources that meet the needs of all students. Flexible grouping allows teachers to address students' weaknesses in a focused manner. Small group instruction, working lunches, and before-school learning sessions are a few examples of this. In addition, students might also meet one-on-one with a peer or support staffer to review material or discuss assessments. Students are expected to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways, such as videotaping, portfolios, computer-based presentations, and conferencing. The use of rubrics enhances the evaluation of student progress, while allowing for a variety of assessment methods. The ongoing assessment and re-evaluation of instruction and student growth is an important aspect of our success.

Technology is also a vital instructional component at Discovery. Teachers integrate it into their classrooms in a variety of ways and creatively put technology in the hands of their students as well. Students utilize mobile labs and tablets. Teachers give students opportunities to "Bring Your Own Device" to class. Using the technology heightens student engagement and allows for new types of differentiation. By making curriculum and instruction available to students through sites like Edmodo, students are able to review material through a study stack or watch a video over the material discussed in class that day. Students make choices about what learning tools work best for them. Through technology choices, learning sessions are tailored to each student's academic needs.

Whether through the selection of the latest technological teaching tool or the time-tested technique of one-on-one teacher-student tutoring, each child at Discovery is recognized and treated as an individual with unlimited potential.

6. Professional Development:

Relevant, engaging professional development opportunities are not only offered to teachers at Discovery, but teachers also facilitate quality professional development sessions. Topics and themes reflect the needs of students and teachers and support Discovery's goals. These varied opportunities encourage teachers to fine tune their craft and provide additional avenues to support students.

At a district level, teachers participate in trainings directly related to the mapping and creation of curriculum. These include dialogue with leaders in their field, such as PARCC curriculum consultant Mike Rush, as we focus on the transition to the Indiana Common Core Standards. This opportunity coupled with Acuity training directly contributes to the high academic standards and high student achievement at Discovery. Teachers also worked with Dr. Rob March in implementing a successful positive behavior plan. The AIM High plan echoes the school mission and continues to play a role in the rich culture of Discovery.

In addition teachers at Discovery take an active role in their own professional progress. After participating in training by experts from the Collaborative of Teaching and Learning in the Adolescent Literacy Model, a Discovery Literacy Team evolved. This team facilitates staff trainings, offers summer collaboration sessions, and shares instructional strategies with teachers of all subject areas. Thinking Thursday sessions are offered before school and highlight literacy strategies and technology ideas. The selection of these topics stem from teacher surveys and other data collection. Footprint Observations serve as yet another avenue for teachers to share their professional knowledge. During these observations teachers visit classroom throughout the building to observe others to gain ideas and share positive findings. Additionally, book studies provide a way for teachers to explore new trends in education. The staff has read and studied books such as: Focus: Elevating the Essentials to Radically Improve Student Learning and Results Now by Michael J. Schmoker.

With the increased role of technology, Discovery teachers lead the way by participating in various technology trainings. Canvas, Draftbuilder and Co-Writer are a few of the most recent trainings. Discovery teachers have facilitated trainings on the use of iPads and the creation of blogs with Blogger. Teachers have also visited local schools to gain new and different technology uses.

The Teacher Evaluation Rubric also serves as the foundation for all professional development. Teachers can direct their own plan for professional development by identifying areas of the rubric that need enhancement.

7. School Leadership:

The principal and assistant principal lead with a vision that promotes high standards of achievement for all, a rigorous curriculum, quality instruction, a culture of learning together, and developing a strong connection to our community. The leadership philosophy at Discovery Middle School is collaborative in nature.

The principal is an instructional leader, a collaborator, a developer, and a cheerleader. The administrative team supports staff and students to maintain interactive, rigorous, and adventure-filled school days that are student-centered. Together, we evaluate and monitor student progress and growth. We react quickly if there is a problem to get the student back on track both academically or behaviorally. We expect every student to be successful.

All staff have received literacy training and those strategies are evident in our classrooms. A literacy team facilitates our school's literacy plan and supports teachers. They observe one another's classrooms, offer coaching, and model lessons and strategies. We extend our collaborative study across the school and the community as we have celebrated One Book One School. Books are purchased for our entire school community - students, staff, lunchroom servers, bus drivers, custodians. Our reading is encouraged by our student news crew, climaxing in a battle of the "book" among students and staff. For the record, our students have always won!

We teach and practice a set of Lifelong Guidelines, which have been in place since the school opened in 1996. Discovery's Positive Behavior Program is supported by all staff, and led by a diverse group. AIM High (Attitude, Integrity, Make a Difference) is common language used throughout the building. The guidance department creates a strong student to parent relationship by training, modeling, and educating our students towards AIM High standards.

Discovery believes strongly that all students should have a voice and be a contributing member of the school. In the classroom and through extracurricular activities, students know their voice is important and is heard. They routinely write suggestions for improvements and create clubs that address their needs. An example is the creation of our Discovery Buddy Club which promotes positive, genuine friendships between students and their peers with disabilities. Just this fall students sponsored collections for Sandy

Hook, hurricane victims, our local food pantry, and a memorial for a former student. Students and staff AIM high in all they do.

This climate of genuine performance and caring results in a wonderful working/learning place called Discovery!

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6 Test: ISTEP+/IMAST

Edition/Publication Year: 1997/2009 Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
Pass and Pass Plus	96	91	91	94	96
Pass+	54	43	32	35	46
Number of students tested	281	288	275	283	306
Percent of total students tested	99	100	99	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	2	3	2	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	1	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Pass and Pass Plus	90	79	93	84	85
Pass+	20	19	15	20	31
Number of students tested	30	42	27	25	13
2. African American Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Pass and Pass Plus	100	73	68	71	73
Pass+	31	23	36	5	15
Number of students tested	13	30	22	21	30
5. English Language Learner Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Pass and Pass Plus	94	85	89	93	100
Pass+	69	58	63	57	86
Number of students tested	16	26	19	14	14
NOTES:					
The subgroups left blank indicate we have less than 10 in those groups. Our state does not disaggregate data for groups less than 10 in number. Indiana changed ISTEP testing from fall to spring during the 2008-09 school year.					

13IN6

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6 Test: ISTEP+/IMAST

Edition/Publication Year: 1997/2009 Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
Pass and Pass Plus	97	91	92	91	90
Pass+	59	47	40	37	11
Number of students tested	280	288	275	282	306
Percent of total students tested	99	100	99	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	2	3	2	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	1	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Pass and Pass Plus	90	79	81	88	62
Pass+	33	21	22	24	0
Number of students tested	30	42	27	25	13
2. African American Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Pass and Pass Plus	92	70	68	57	57
Pass+	23	27	32	5	3
Number of students tested	13	30	22	21	30
5. English Language Learner Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Pass and Pass Plus	94	92	90	93	100
Pass+	69	58	58	64	29
Number of students tested	16	26	19	14	14
NOTES:					
The subgroups left blank indicate we have less than 10 in those groups. Our state does not disaggregate data for groups less than 10 in number. Indiana changed ISTEP testing from fall to spring during the 2008-09 school year.					

13IN6

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 7 Test: ISTEP+/IMAST

Edition/Publication Year: 1997/2009 Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
Pass and Pass Plus	92	91	91	89	98
Pass+	50	41	42	38	49
Number of students tested	290	288	287	305	277
Percent of total students tested	99	98	99	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	2	2	2	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Pass and Pass Plus	82	82	83	70	94
Pass+	23	11	34	22	39
Number of students tested	44	28	29	23	18
2. African American Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Pass and Pass Plus	74	65	59	62	85
Pass+	26	29	9	4	25
Number of students tested	19	17	22	26	20
5. English Language Learner Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Pass and Pass Plus	92	94	93	94	100
Pass+	56	78	73	75	60
Number of students tested	25	18	15	16	10
NOTES:					
The subgroups left blank indicate we have less than 10 in those groups. Our state does not disaggregate data for groups less than 10 in number. Indiana changed ISTEP testing from fall to spring during the 2008-09 school year.					

13IN6

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 7 Test: ISTEP+/IMAST

Edition/Publication Year: 1997/2009 Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
Pass and Pass Plus	95	98	93	91	92
Pass+	40	46	39	31	20
Number of students tested	290	288	288	305	277
Percent of total students tested	99	98	99	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	2	2	2	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Pass and Pass Plus	89	86	83	74	83
Pass+	18	18	28	17	6
Number of students tested	44	28	29	23	18
2. African American Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Pass and Pass Plus	68	88	68	54	60
Pass+	26	12	5	0	5
Number of students tested	19	17	22	26	20
5. English Language Learner Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Pass and Pass Plus	96	100	93	94	100
Pass+	44	72	80	69	50
Number of students tested	25	18	15	16	10
NOTES:					
The subgroups left blank indicate we have less than 10 in those groups. Our state does not disaggregate data for groups less than 10 in number. Indiana changed ISTEP testing from fall to spring during the 2008-09 school year.					

13IN6

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 8 Test: ISTEP+/IMAST

Edition/Publication Year: 1997/2009 Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
Pass and Pass Plus	98	91	92	93	95
Pass+	48	37	33	33	36
Number of students tested	291	295	304	272	268
Percent of total students tested	99	99	100	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	2	1	2	4
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Pass and Pass Plus	95	83	91	83	100
Pass+	10	33	30	17	19
Number of students tested	21	24	23	18	16
2. African American Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Pass and Pass Plus	92	70	60	53	65
Pass+	23	10	8	6	18
Number of students tested	13	20	25	17	17
5. English Language Learner Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Pass and Pass Plus	100	100	94	Masked	Masked
Pass+	63	79	71	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	19	14	17	9	8
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. The subgroups left blank indicate we have less than 10 in those groups. Our state does not disaggregate data for groups less than 10 in number. Indiana changed ISTEP testing from fall to spring during the 2008-09 school year.					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 8 Test: ISTEP+/IMAST

Edition/Publication Year: 1997/2009 Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
Pass and Pass Plus	97	93	95	93	92
Pass+	34	24	27	22	17
Number of students tested	290	296	303	273	268
Percent of total students tested	99	99	99	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	2	1	2	4
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Pass and Pass Plus	81	88	96	94	88
Pass+	10	17	17	6	6
Number of students tested	21	24	23	18	16
2. African American Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Pass and Pass Plus	62	65	72	41	65
Pass+	8	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	13	20	25	17	17
5. English Language Learner Students					
Pass and Pass Plus					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Pass and Pass Plus	100	93	100	Masked	Masked
Pass+	53	60	47	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	19	15	17	9	8
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. The subgroups/years left blank indicate we have less than 10 in those groups. Our state does not disaggregate data for groups less than 10 in number. Indiana changed ISTEP testing from fall to spring during the 2008-09 school year.					